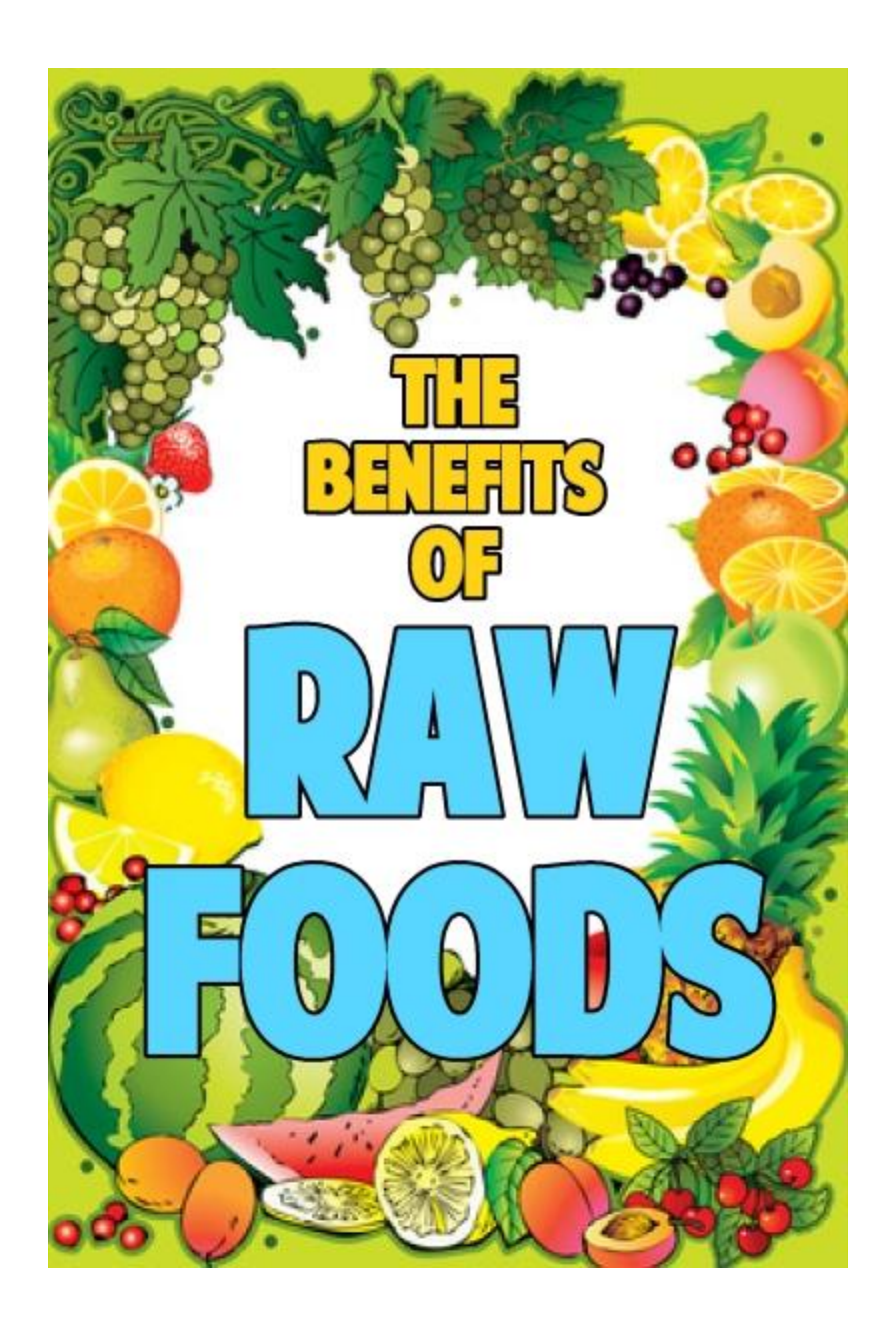

THE
BENEFITS
OF
RAW
FOODS

CONTENTS

Introduction TO EATING RAW FOODS

Anytime you watch the news, read a magazine, surf the internet, or read the newspaper one thing is clear – we are concerned about our health. There are several different ways to achieve a better state of health. You can make diet and lifestyle changes that result in you reaching your goals. But unfortunately, we often turn to fad diets and extreme exercising in order to achieve what we believe to be a normal state of health.

Well, doing things that are extreme are not necessarily good for you. The body is a very complex machine. It takes the right nutrients in order for it to perform optimally. Our modern diets are depleted in a lot of these nutrients and it makes it difficult to achieve the level of health that we really want. Even a diet that is healthy by certain standards may not contain all we need. That is, unless, we consume a high amount of raw foods in order to make up for it.

One of the best ways out there to live a healthy lifestyle is to make the switch and eat a diet made up of mainly raw foods. This includes any food that is in its uncooked state. Because raw foods contain a high amount of nutrients, especially if the raw foods are also organic, it can help clear up certain health problems like obesity and heart disease and cause you to live a life that is filled with energy and free of disease.

Celebrities have embraced this way of eating as well. In fact, this is a diet that countless celebrities, like Alicia Silverstone, have endorsed in the past. They hear about it, try it, and decide that it is one of the healthiest diets out there. In fact, most people who enjoy the raw foods diet are convinced it’s responsible for their increased energy and improved health. All they need to do is read the facts about it and then try it. The resulting energy and improved state of health are certainly enough to convince them.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO EAT RAW FOODS?

A raw foods diet is one that contains mostly food that is in its uncooked form. Food can be heated to a certain extent, but not if it reaches above 116 degrees Fahrenheit. This is because high temperatures can destroy the nutrients and other things that make the diet so healthy.

However, some people mistakenly believe that the raw foods diet contains no cooked foods. This is not true because some raw foodists eat a diet with as little as 60% raw foods and as much as 100%. People who are new to eating a raw foods diet may choose to stick to the lower end. As they realize how helpful this diet really is to their health, they may increase the amount of raw food in their diet. This is good news for them because some people want to make the switch but are not willing to go "cold turkey". They want something gradual. Besides, changing to a raw foods diet all at once may not be good for your digestive system. You need to give the body adequate time to adapt to the new way of eating.

Despite that one minor thing, this is a desirable diet in a lot of ways. The foods can be incredibly diverse because there are a lot of creative chefs out there who have put together some really creative recipes. And think about it. Ever since childhood we have been told to eat our fruits and vegetables. When we diet one of the first things we do is reach for the raw veggies as a snack because they're filling, satisfying, and low calorie. Interesting how the things people were saying to us in childhood have come true – they weren't just myths. Raw foods really are good for you.

Some raw foodists practice what is known as raw veganism – they endorse an entirely plant based diet. Others eat things like raw meats, raw fish, raw eggs, non-pasteurized and non-homogenized dairy products in addition to the uncooked plant foods. It is important to note that one has to be really

careful when putting this kind of diet together, however. Some foods can be harmful when eaten raw. However, we'll go over that later.

GOING RAW – THE BASICS

In order to follow a raw foods diet, care needs to be taken that more than half, or at least sixty per cent, of all of the food you consume need to be in their raw state. If this is a lifestyle you are considering, keep these things in mind as you make the switch or think about making the change.

- A raw foods diet should include little, if any, cooked foods. In fact, foods can be heated but the amount aloud is not that much. If you want to eat a pure raw foods diet nothing can be cooked.

- Being a vegan is an additional, optional choice. However, even though some animal foods are allowed it is certainly easier to eat an entirely plant based diet. That's why most raw foodists are actually vegetarian and some are even complete vegans.

- Eating organic food is another way to increase the benefits of the raw food diet. This is because organic food is much higher in nutrients.

- Another great thing about the raw foods diet is that there aren't a lot of convenience foods out there which further add to the health benefits. However, you can find packaged foods in the store. These are very good for you, however, and not considered processed foods at all.

- Eating a raw foods diet definitely saves you time in the kitchen because you won't need to prepare elaborate meals. However, there are some recipes. It's just that there aren't a lot of complex meals t hat are being made. This saves you a lot of hassle when preparing meals.

Of course, if you've been following the raw foods diet, these are things you've already experienced. This is a diet that when followed correctly and with the right mindset it can benefit your life and your health considerably. And if you are looking to make the switch, it is easy to follow especially if you choose the vegan route.

WHAT THIS EBOOK WILL COVER

Yes, it's true that a raw foods diet can be great for you. With the prevalence of things like farmers' markets, organic food stores, and raw food meals and packaged foods available in restaurants and in health food stores, it is easier than ever to make the switch. This eBook will tell you everything that you need to know to embrace the raw foods lifestyle. It will cover:

- The benefits to eating a raw food diet and why it's good for you. As you will see, there are a lot of benefits that might make it worth it to make the switch.

- Talks about the steps needed to help someone successfully make the switch into a raw food diet. They are simple, but there are some tricks that you can do to make the transition go a lot smoother.

- A more detailed look at what raw food is and how to put together a balanced diet with raw foods.

- How to stock your kitchen with a variety of raw foods products as well as the kitchen equipment needed.

- Will cover basic cooking techniques needed to create raw foods meals.

- How to plan a complete raw foods menu while getting the right balance vitamins, minerals, and nutrients for your body.

- EBook also includes various raw foods recipes to help you get started eating a raw foods diet right away.

As you work through this eBook, you’ll learn how to change your health and your life with the raw foods diet. However, you need to be in the right frame of mind. This eBook will help you decide if making the switch is right for you and then walk you through it step by step.

Once you do make the switch to eat a raw foods diet, you will know that you are doing something that is right for your health. If you are undecided, try following it for a week or two to see if it is something that you can stick to. If it isn’t, consider scaling back on your percentage. Even if you are unwilling to give up cooked foods entirely, even a diet of 60% raw foods can be beneficial. This is because you will still be getting the benefit of the extra enzymes and the nutrients that are present in raw foods.

DIFFERENT KINDS OF RAW FOODISTS

It is also important to understand that there are different levels of being a raw foodist. Here are the choices:

- Eat a 100% raw diet that doesn’t include any cooked foods at all.

- Be a raw foods vegan where 100% of your diet comes from plant sources. This is optional because you can still find raw animal sources of foods such as raw oysters and raw milk straight from the cow.

- Be a raw food vegetarian in some form. Lacto-ovo vegetarians only eat plant based foods as well as dairy and eggs. Remember that all dairy and egg products need to be in their raw state. You can also eat only dairy and plant foods or only egg and plant foods.

- Eat a partial raw foods diet. You can still be considered a raw foodist by eating as little as a 60% raw foods diet. This is something that is great for a beginner but you also may want to stick with this exclusively as you get more experienced.

These are just some of the things to keep in mind as you work through this ebook and decide to make the switch. If you are undecided if this is truly the lifestyle for you, you may want to have a 60% raw foods diet at first and not worry about omitting animal foods for now. You can always transition to something more dramatic as a personal choice later on in your journey.

CRITICS OF THE RAW FOOD DIET

To be fair, there are critics of this kind of eating as well. For example, it has been said that people living in cold climates shouldn't follow a raw foods diet. Some people find that eating all raw food doesn't agree with them. Others don't feel as if the diet is very satisfying or tasty. And still others are not convinced that all the hype is true.

Another thing that concerns a lot of people is the fact that the raw food diet lacks variety. Yes, you can prepare raw foods into an array of pleasing recipes. But cooked food is part of what makes eating so interesting. Critics of the raw foods diet believe that raw foods should be eaten, but it is okay to have cooked food as well. It is also important to understand that some foods,

like tomatoes show an increase in their health benefits when they are cooked. If eaten raw they are still nutritious, just not as nutritious as they could be.

However, this eBook will focus on the benefits, not what the critics say. The fact is, eating raw foods has benefited a lot of people and has made them healthier. As you make the decision whether or not to change to a raw food diet, or continue eating a raw food diet, keep in mind that it isn't for everyone. It is important to check with your doctor before undergoing any drastic changes.

Note that as you make the switch you may experience some gastric discomfort. As your body adapts to a new, healthier way of eating these symptoms should subside. If they don't go away, you should see a doctor. This discomfort, however, can be minimized if the changes are made gradually, not dramatically.

Remember that it is important to see a doctor if you are deciding to make the switch. If you have health problems they may want to monitor your progress. Also some people may not be suited for this kind of diet. It will be up to you and your doctor to decide what you want to do.

1

WHY EAT RAW FOOD?

To some, eating a raw food diet may sound strange. They've been accustomed to eating packaged and processed foods all their lives. Their idea of a vegetable is something that is boiled in water for a long time, and the end result is something that doesn't even look like the original. Their notion of fruit is also one that is highly processed.

The raw food lifestyle is one that embraces the simple notion of eating a raw carrot, or an apple or orange in its original state. If it's organic that adds an extra bonus. And if the fruit or vegetable was picked only hours or even minutes before you eat it, that's even better.

Aside from the simple pleasure eating raw food brings, it also gives you multiple health benefits. That is the number one reason why people end up making the switch – for their health.

WHY IS THE RAW FOODS DIET SO HEALTHY?

So what are these benefits people keep talking about, anyway? In a way, it almost seems too good to be true. Can a diet that focuses on raw foods really be so good for you that it has people all over the world singing its praises? To the people that follow it, the answer is definitely yes. It is as good for you as people claim largely because the overall nutrient content of the diet is a lot greater.

People are making the switch on a constant basis because of the health benefits. But before we examine what these benefits are, it is important to understand exactly *why* the raw foods diet carries these health benefits. Yes the health benefits do exist but it is important to weigh all the information before you decide what to do.

WHY NOT ENJOY A WESTERN DIET?

That's easy. It's because the typical Western diet is not food for us and the diet falls short in a lot of ways. Foods are over processed and filled with harmful saturated fat and trans fatty acids. When foods are highly processed the also tend to be high in sodium.

Both of these can cause health problems. Not only is the raw foods diet low in fat, but it contains a perfect balance of minerals. Since the food isn't processed, there are also hardly any trans fats and saturated fats at all.

However, not all western diets are like this. For example, the Mediterranean diet is known for also being healthy. So, critics of the raw foods diet say that there are other ways of eating in the world that can be pleasurable and beneficial as well. It is important to weight all the information and make your own choices.

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE ENZYMES

One of the things that make raw foods so beneficial is the enzymes. All living foods contain enzymes. In fact, our own bodies manufacture enzymes that aid in digestion. For example, the enzyme lipase helps the body digest fats and the enzyme lactase helps our bodies digest milk. Those who are lactose

intolerant do not have the ability in their body to produce the lactase enzyme, mainly for genetic reasons.

No matter what our bodies need to digest, an enzyme that is produced in our bodies is a crucial part of that process. The body is equipped with different organs that help manufacture these organs. And even though these organs work throughout our lives, they do slow down as we get older. This means that our bodies may not be producing all of the enzymes we need. Not only that, but the modern diet is traditionally hard on the digestive system and it has to work overtime to digest the foods we eat. This means it needs to work hard to produce all of the enzymes needed.

This is where raw foods come in. Since they already have enzymes in them, they help relieve the pressure on our digestive systems. This in turn helps the digestive system work at an optimum level. It also helps the body conserve enzymes and prevents some of the drastic slow-down that the digestive system experiences as we age.

However, when foods are cooked, the enzymes are largely destroyed. So, unless the food is raw, we won't get the benefit of the enzymes. Yes, we could supplement enzymes but it is generally not a good idea to get a lot of our nutrients from supplements. Getting them from foods is better for your health.

Two prime examples of important enzymes that are in food are papain, which is in papaya, and bromelain, which is in pineapple. Both of these have been shown to improve digestion and have other health benefits as well such as helping ease muscle soreness. Enzymes are important and more and more people are realizing how powerful they really are.

Also, enzymes won't be around forever. Technically our organs that make them will always be intact. However, the organs slow down as we age which

means that not a lot of enzymes will always be present. If we eat raw foods we will be better off.

Some people believe that aging is nothing more than our enzymes running out. That is another reason why people love the raw foods diet. It helps them maintain their youthful appearance for a lot longer. Even diets in the world that aren't necessarily raw foods focused do contain a lot of raw fruits and vegetables for this reason.

CRUCIAL ELEMENTS OF FOOD ARE OFTEN DESTROYED BY HEAT

Heat not only destroys the important enzymes, but it also takes a toll on some of the nutrients that are present in food. Even though the enzymes are an important element, they are not the only thing that's important.

- Water is lost during the cooking process because the cell structure breaks down, thus causing some of the water to escape.

- Roughly fifty per cent of the protein that is present in food also breaks down. So, one cup of blackberries has roughly 1 gram of protein. If the blackberries were to be cooked, it would only have 1/2 a gram of protein after the cooking process is complete.

- At least half of the vitamin and mineral content of the foods you cook are either destroyed or lost by heat. For example, vitamin C is highly unstable and rarely survives the cooking process. Also, scores of minerals are lost in the cooking water when steaming, boiling, and blanching foods.

When someone makes the choice to eat raw foods, they are keeping their body's enzyme reserves intact and also preventing the food from losing vital nutrients, vitamins, and minerals. Keeping these things present food is an important part of being healthy.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS TO THE RAW FOODS DIET?

We've discussed that raw foods have a lot of health benefits. These health benefits are what bring people to the diet in the first place. But what are they exactly? This section will examine them in more detail.

THE RAW FOOD DIET INCREASES YOUR ENERGY

One thing that the raw foods diet is known for is to help people feel more energetic. When the body is being fed the right balance of nutrients and enzymes, it makes our body systems function even better. The reward is that everything will run more efficiently which will then improve our energy levels.

The modern diet, especially one that is filled with processed foods, depletes our energy levels because of the toll it takes on the digestive system. The raw foods diet helps this because it adds the enzymes and other nutrients back in your body.

You see, our bodies are meant to function a certain way when fed all the right nutrients. This is what makes the raw foods diet so powerful. It supplies the raw foods diet fairly easily. This means that the body has a chance to work at its optimal level because you are giving it the nutrients that it needs.

YOUR HEART DISEASE RISK WILL GO DOWN

Heart disease is a big problem in our modern society. Poor diet and lack of exercise add to the problem and even cause the problem in most people. If we were to take the time to care for our bodies by exercising and eating right, then heart disease risk would be greatly reduced.

The raw foods diet is naturally equipped to help people lower their heard disease risk. This is because it is not only a primarily vegetarian diet, but it also contains a higher content of nutrients and enzymes than normal. Because of this, heart disease risk go does dramatically.

IT HELPS ENHANCE YOUR OVERALL APPEARANCE

Your skin, hair, and nails are the things about your appearance that most people notice about you, especially the hair and skin. This is because it is the part of your body that people see the most. When your healthy, you appearance will look that way.

The raw food diet helps you look your best because it contains a good balance of nutrients to help keep your skin, hair and nails looking fresh and healthy. The skin is most especially affected because if the body is filled with toxins and unhealthy byproducts it will show on the skin. Since a raw foods diet is actually detoxifying and not harmful, the skin will clear up. Also, hair will become shinier and the nails will become stronger.

We all know that clear skin, shiny eyes, and strong healthy hair are all desirable things. To get them we often turn to cosmetics. This can get expensive. We are using cosmetics to supply what nature is willing to give us

with the right nutrients. Our bodies are designed to have this attractive appearance – we just don't take advantage of it often enough. When we eat poorly our appearance suffers. It gets to the point where even cosmetics don't help. We need to make the change – and fast. The best way to do this is through the raw foods diet not expensive beauty products.

YOU'LL LOSE WEIGHT ON THE RAW FOODS DIET

The raw foods diet is naturally low in fat and calories. This means that you'll definitely lose weight while following the diet. In fact, people are so encouraged by the weight loss and the way the diet makes them feel that they won't even want to return to their old way of eating. Also, eating certain raw foods, such as celery, actually burns more calories to digest than the actual food, meaning that it has negative calories.

YOUR DIGESTION WILL IMPROVE

People who follow the raw foods diet will also experience improved digestion. This has a lot to do with the enzymes but it is also because of the relatively high fiber content of the diet. The modern Western diet depletes the digestive system and causes it to work too hard. Since the raw foods diet contains enzymes of its own, the digestive system doesn't need to release a lot of its own enzymes. This leads to greater efficiency within the digestive system. If the digestive system isn't working properly it can really take a toll on your health.

EXPERIENCE AN IMPROVED STATE OF HEALTH

Overall, the raw foods diet improves your over state of health, largely because of the high nutrient content of the diet but also because of the enzymes. Once the body has the nutrients it needs, all of the body systems will begin to function a lot better. The increased energy that happens as a result of this growing efficiency helps to increase the body's general health, especially over a longer time period such as several months or even several years.

2

MAKING THE SWITCH TO A RAW FOODS DIET

By now you should have a solid understanding of what the raw foods diet is and what it can do for you. You may have already come to the decision to give the diet a try. Even though it's fairly obvious on what you need to do to make the switch – eat more raw foods – there is an art to making the switch successfully.

You see, it may be easy to start out. All you need to do is eat fruits and vegetables as well as sprouted grains and special raw "breads" that are made with these grains. However, if the switch is done incorrectly you could either lose your motivation or experience gastric discomfort. Both of these things can be discouraging.

If you are undecided about whether or not you want to make the switch to a raw foods diet you can approach this in several ways. First, you can think about it more by doing research and talking with people who follow the raw foods diet. You can also take the plunge and start following the steps listed below to help you make the transition.

After you transition, you can follow the diet for several weeks or months (it's up to you) and see how you feel. If you feel great, it would be easy to continue. If you don't notice a difference or found the diet too hard to follow, you can either scale back on the percentage of raw food you are consuming

or abandon the diet all together. However, even if you do stop following the raw foods diet you can still incorporate elements of it into your daily ritual.

Keep in mind that you don't need to make the change all at once. You can adapt these steps to be as dramatic or gradual as you want. Changing to a raw foods diet is a personal journey. As you go through the process you will discover the routine that is right for your needs.

Here are the steps that will help you make the transition into a raw foods diet. If you follow them, the whole process with go a lot smoother. If you don't do things to help make it easier things can get frustrated pretty quickly. A lot of people may end up giving up before they really give it a try. However, with a little planning the transition will go smoothly and you'll be able to see just how good for you the diet really can be. The key is that you really do need to plan or else you'll be frustrated.

STEP ONE: WHAT ARE YOUR MOTIVES?

The first step to making the switch to a raw foods diet is to make sure you understand your motives for switching to a raw foods diet. At this point, it is a good idea to start a journal and talk about how you feel and why you want to make the change. Maybe you have a health problem you are hoping to solve. Or perhaps you are just doing it to be as healthy as you can.

By clearly writing down your motives, it will help keep you motivated. In a way, these motives will also become your goals. If your motive is weight loss, for example, you can turn that into a goal by saying how many pounds you want to lose and how long you want it to take. This stage will help you begin the journey in a positive way.

Without clarity as to what your motives are, you could give up before you really even give the diet a chance. The idea is to stick with it long enough to really see the results. If you give up too soon you won't have the positive experience you were hoping for. This shouldn't be frustrating – it should be positive. Understanding your motives will help with that.

STEP TWO: DO YOU HAVE THE RIGHT MINDSET?

Changing to a raw foods diet is something that will require you to embrace a new way of thinking. In order to successfully make the switch, you need to have the right mindset. It's essential.

In the previous section you spent some time discovering what your motives are for embracing this new lifestyle. Your next step is to build on that and develop a positive attitude. If you are excited about the changes and positive about what you can accomplish, it will make success on this new diet more likely.

The right mindset will also help you if you are starting to feel discouraged. Just remember what your goals are and pay attention to how you feel throughout the process and it will help keep you in a positive frame of mind.

STEP THREE: GET PREPARED

This step is perhaps the most involved. Once you decide what you want to accomplish with the raw foods diet and put yourself in the right frame of mind, you actually need to get prepared. For many, making the switch

means you have to adopt a whole new way of thinking. This involves things like

- Collecting recipes
- Coming up with a solid eating plan
- Learning the basics of the diet
- Developing a strategy for food shopping
- Determining a strategy for dining out

It is especially important to go through this planning phase for the first few weeks of your switch. If you are transitioning into the raw foods diet gradually you can also account for that in your planning.

STEP FOUR: SET YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS

Once you determine what kinds of recipes and menus you will be cooking, it is important to set your kitchen up to accommodate a raw foods diet. As with any eating plan, this will be a key determiner of success.

- If everyone in your family is embracing the raw foods lifestyle, get rid of anything that isn't part of this diet.

- Stock the pantry and refrigerator with a wide array of raw foods ingredients. This includes basic ingredients like sprouts and raw grains and also any packaged foods you find at the health food store.

- It is also a good idea to determine if you have the right kitchen equipment needed to prepare raw foods meals. This will make your life easier and also make preparing meals a lot more fun.

We'll go over this step in greater detail in Chapter 4 of this eBook. Bear in mind that you can make this step as simple or complex as you want. It also isn't necessary to buy everything you need all at once.

STEP FIVE: MONITOR PROGRESS

The last crucial element of making the switch to a raw foods diet as successful as possible is to have a system in place that will help you monitor your progress. In the first step we talked about setting up a journal. The journal can be in any form you want but if you put it into a three ringed binder you can also use the binder to include your recipes and menus.

There are a few things you should keep track of. Keep a journal of what you eat on a daily basis. I'd also monitor things like weight and body fat to make sure that your weight stays at a healthy level. At the end of each day, spend some time talking about how you feel. If you have any health problems, for example, talk about how the diet seems to be affecting it.

This will help keep you motivated as you go through the process. If you have a tangible way to measure your progress, it will help make this process an even bigger success for you.

STEP SIX: MOST IMPORTANTLY, HAVE FUN!

Changing to a raw foods diet shouldn't be all work and no play. The process needs to be fun and satisfying. The first week will be the most challenging

because this is where the most dramatic changes to your diet and lifestyle will take place. Once the first week is over, it will get easier.

That is why it is important to not get discouraged during that first week. Once you get passed that hurdle, you can relax a bit. And once you relax, you can learn to have fun. After all, this is an exciting time. You are taking the time out of your busy schedule to take control of your health.

To keep things fun - why not make it a goal to try a few new recipes each week? Eating a raw foods diet is about more than eating raw vegetable sticks and salads all the time. You can actually accomplish a lot of variety in your diet if you take the time to try new things.

Also, raw foods are getting increasingly popular with the dining out scene. Look for restaurants in your area that focus on raw foods or that offers a nice selection of raw meals. You can also invite your friends and family over for a healthy raw foods meal. Share with them your new lifestyle and some healthy and delicious recipes. This will go a long way to making the process a positive experience for you and everyone around you.

3

ALL ABOUT RAW FOOD

As we've covered in previous chapters, raw food is simply food that has not been cooked. This however, does not mean that it needs to be completely cold. The food can actually be heated, but just a little bit. In order for something to be classified as still raw and uncooked, it cannot be heated to anything above 116 degrees Fahrenheit.

That is one of the misconceptions of the raw foods diet. When people here about it, they assume that all the food needs to be cold and crunchy. However, it can be warmed up. It just can't be heated for long enough to actually cook. Otherwise it will not be considered raw. If the temperature is too high, the enzymes and vitamins will be destroyed. This is good news for people who are looking to get a little more variety in their diet.

So now, you should have an understanding of exactly what raw food really is. But it's time to go into more detail so you can get started with your new lifestyle. This chapter will explain about what kinds of foods are acceptable in the raw foods diet and also how to make great food choices that will lead to a balanced diet.

WHAT MAKES UP A HEALTHY RAW FOODS DIET?

So, what are the things that people who follow a raw foods diet can actually eat? As mentioned above, the requirements are that the food must be unprocessed and in its whole, raw state. It is optional but the foods can be heated slightly, making sure to get the food to around 110 - 116 degrees otherwise it will begin to destroy the enzymes, vitamins, and minerals.

These are just some of the things that you can enjoy on a raw foods diet:

- Fresh squeezed juice
- Fruits, fresh and dried
- Vegetables
- Sea vegetables such as nori and kelp
- Nuts and seeds
- Grains, as long as they are unprocessed
- Legumes and beans

To make certain foods such as grains and legumes even more nutritious and a better addition to the raw foods diet, they can be sprouted by soaking with water. For example, most legumes should be soaked at least overnight, especially when they are in their dried state because it makes them easier to digest. This is because soaking them activates the enzymes which help aid the digestive system as you are eating.

It is important to note, however, that raw doesn't always mean "healthy". There are certain foods that should not be eaten in their raw state because they contain elements that can be considered toxic by some. Before you make the decision to completely follow a raw diet, care needs to be taken that you don't make yourself sick. Some foods to watch out for and possibly ignore altogether in their raw state include:

- Buckwheat greens

- Parsnips
- Raw eggs
- Raw meat, poultry, and fish
- Kidney beans
- Potatoes – (only if the flesh under the skin is green)
- Alfalfa sprouts
- Cassava and cassava flour
- Apricot kernels

There may be others so it is a good idea to research the foods you are considering eating first.

In addition, raw foods may also have a high content of bacteria and other things that can cause food poisoning. Since heat destroys the majority of these, some foods should not be eaten raw at all or else they'll make you sick. Foods like meat, poultry, eggs, and even milk put you at risk for food poisoning and other illnesses that come from food.

Don't let this information discourage you from following a raw foods diet, however. Just steer clear of the foods mentioned above that can be dangerous when raw.

MAKING GREAT FOOD CHOICES

When following a raw foods diet, it is important to take the time to eat a balanced diet – one that is filled with all the right nutrients to help increase your health. Granted, when eating such healthy foods that are rich in nutrients it is easier to achieve this than with most diets.

However, since a raw foods diet is mostly vegetarian, a lot of the deficiencies that vegetarians face can also be a problem for raw foodists. There is a way around this, of course, but it does take careful planning. Here are some things to watch out for.

GET ENOUGH PROTEIN

Though animal products are considered superior sources of protein, there are plenty of great protein sources in the plant kingdom. The goal is to make sure you get enough of it. Even fruits and vegetables have protein, so it does add up. But in order to make sure you get enough, you may want to make sure to have a few servings a day of some of these protein rich foods:

- Raw nuts and seeds (not roasted)
- Grains, especially protein rich ones like quinoa
- Legumes such as lentils. Make sure to pair these with a grain to make for a complete protein.

As you follow the raw foods diet making sure you get enough protein will get easier and easier. At first, however, you may need to keep track of your protein servings.

BEWARE OF IRON DEFICIENCY

Even though the iron that is found in animal foods (called heme iron) is the most absorbable, non heme iron, or iron that is present in plant sources, is also well absorbed, especially when paired with food that is high in vitamin C.

However, iron is a little scarcer in plant based sources so you need to make sure you are getting enough of it. Iron deficiency can cause fatigue and other problems. So if you are noticing that your energy level is not improving, check to make sure you are consuming raw foods that are high in iron. Here’s a list:

- Green beans (one of the best plant sources of iron)
- Spinach and other raw, leafy greens.
- Raw wheat germ (make sure it isn’t toasted)
- Blackstrap molasses (can take this in supplement form)
- Lima beans
- Dry fruit, especially dried prunes and raisins

Just be sure to include these iron rich foods in your diet at least several times a week. This will prevent fatigue and other problems that are associated with low iron.

GET ENOUGH CALCIUM

Yes, it is true that milk is one of the better forms of calcium. The good news is that milk does meet the requirements of being a raw food, as long as it isn’t pasteurized or homogenized. Basically that means that the milk needs to be straight from the cow and in its freshest state.

However, if you are a vegan in addition to being a raw foodist, milk is not an acceptable ingredient. In that case you will need to turn to the plant kingdom for your calcium. These foods include dark, leafy green vegetables such as spinach and kale and nuts such as hazelnuts and almonds. Make sure the nuts are labeled as “raw” when you buy them and that they aren’t roasted.

TIPS FOR GETTING A BALANCED DIET

Since the raw foods diet is already rich in vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients all you need to do is make sure you are getting these things all in the right balance. It helps if you follow advice given by nutrition professionals. As you start your journey, you may want to consult a nutritionist who specializes in raw foods.

If you are a raw food vegan, you can follow the guidelines that vegans follow. Just understand that you may need to adapt some things to suit the raw foods lifestyle. Here are some basic guidelines to follow to get you started.

- Eat a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, preferably organic. You may even want to experiment with growing your own.
- Be sure to incorporate plenty of protein rich foods into your diet.
- Eat a wide variety of acceptable grains.
- Drink plenty of water. Filtered water is best unless you completely trust your water source.
- Make sure you are getting enough iron and calcium.

That is one of the reasons why it is important to keep a food journal and to plan your menus. It will help you make sure that you are getting the right nutrients in the right proportions. If you plan your meals in advance, it will increase the likelihood that the food will be as healthy as possible.

4

CREATING A RAW FOODS KITCHEN

Setting up your kitchen is the biggest thing that will determine whether or not your experience with the raw foods diet will be a positive one. Having the correct ingredients on hand as well as purchasing the right kitchen equipment to prepare the meals is absolutely essential.

This includes getting rid of anything that won't help you prepare successful raw foods meals. If you have a family hopefully everyone will be making the switch to a raw foods diet. That way, you won't need to keep ingredients on hand that will not support this lifestyle.

STOCKING THE PANTRY AND REFRIGERATOR

The first thing you'll need to do is stock the pantry and refrigerator with raw foods ingredients. You may want to wait until you put together your menu before you start doing this. Otherwise you may buy ingredients that you don't need. However, you may just want to have certain things on hand just in case you want to put together a quick, impromptu meal.

No matter which approach you decide to take, these guidelines will help you as you go through the process of changing your kitchen.

STOCKING THE REFRIGERATOR

Your first step is to make sure the refrigerator is well stocked with the freshest, healthiest ingredients. You may want to have plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables on hand. Fresh fruits can be prepared in a variety of ways including eating them whole, pureeing them, including them in smoothies, and juicing them. Fresh vegetables can be turned into juices, salads, and also eaten whole.

Other refrigerator items include things like sushi grade fishes such as tuna, which are acceptable to eat raw, bean sprouts, prepared food like kimchi, raw oyters, raw meats that are labeled as safe when not cooked, and fresh milk that came straight out of the cow. The meat, dairy, and fish, however, will be omitted if you are a vegan or other form of vegetarian that doesn't include any of these food groups. You may want to hold off on buying these items until you've actually prepared your menu.

FILLING UP THE PANTRY

What you include in your pantry will depend on what you like to eat and the kinds of recipes you will put together. However, here is a starter list of some things that you may want to include in your raw foods pantry.

- Various dried fruits
- Dried mushrooms
- Nuts and seeds such as sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, and almonds (raw)

- Sun dried tomatoes
- Herbs and spices as long as they weren't toasted or roasted
- Raw apple cider vinegar
- Organic olive oil, coconut oil, flaxseed oil, and/or hemp oil
- Various grains like buckwheat, millet, wild rice, kamut, or quinoa
- Legumes such as black beans, lentils, mung beans, and chickpeas
- Various packaged foods that are acceptable for the raw foods diet.

As more and more people are embracing the raw foods diet, stores are starting to carry packaged foods which all meet the standards of the raw foods diet.

GET THE RIGHT KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

Since most of the cooking techniques out there are devoted to actually cooking food, this makes raw foods a lot easier to prepare. This section will give you an overview the various kitchen techniques that are acceptable for the raw foods diet and the equipment needed to pull it off.

If you want more help in this matter, it is a good idea to take a class devoted to teaching you how to prepare delicious raw foods. A basic course will teach you the techniques and how to operate the equipment that is used to make the raw foods.

KITCHEN TECHNIQUES OVERVIEW

The list of acceptable kitchen techniques is not long, but even this short list of techniques can add variety to the foods that you eat. Remember, eating a raw foods diet is a lot more interesting than it may appear at first because it is about more than eating raw fruits and vegetables and endless salads.

The techniques include making sprouts out of various seeds, grains, and beans as well as blending ingredients, drying and dehydrating various foods, and creating fresh juices out of fruits and vegetables. You can also soak things like dried mushrooms, dried fruits, and nuts, legumes, and grains. Soaking nuts, legumes, and grains activates some of the beneficial enzymes and is better for your digestion. Here's a brief description of the techniques.

THE EQUIPMENT NEEDED

To successfully pull off these cooking techniques, the kitchen needs to be stocked with the right equipment. Keep in mind that the equipment you choose will be based on your cooking style and the food techniques you ultimately decide to use. Here are some ideas:

- If you choose to dehydrate food, you will need a dehydrator. Some heat food to more than 116 degrees, however. So make sure you find one that doesn't heat the food that much to dry it out.

- A high quality juicer is a real asset. Juices can bring a lot of variety and pleasure to the diet. Choose a versatile and powerful machine that doesn't leave behind a lot of waste.

- An assortment of jars such as large mason jars is also an asset. You can store juices, sprouts, and other homemade foods in them.

- Blender and a food processor are also a good idea. You can use both for a variety of kitchen techniques included chopping, pureeing, and making smoothies. An immersion blender is a nice alternative to the standard upright blender.

- Standard kitchen tools like knives, bowls, and spoons are also a must have. If you make it a habit to soak beans, legumes, and grains you will also want to find some large containers with lids so that you can cover them as you soak them overnight.

Think about what kind of chef you are. If you don't think you will be dehydrating anything don't purchase an expensive dehydrator. Start with one or two key items such as a blender and a series of jars and containers. As you add more cooking techniques in your repertoire you can expand.

5

RAW FOOD COOKING

In the previous chapter we talked about the various cooking techniques that could be used for the raw foods diet as well as the equipment needed. We also talked about how to stock the pantry and refrigerator with wonderful, wholesome ingredients to have on hand that will allow us to create a variety of dishes.

The missing element is in learning how to actually plan a healthy menu and put together a balanced and complete meal. Once you are following the raw foods diet for a while, this will practically become second nature. Here are some tips that will help you do both of these activities with ease.

READ RAW FOODS COOKBOOKS

There are a lot of great cookbooks and online resources out there that have a lot of recipes. These books also include tips for putting together a great meal. Collect recipes that look interesting to you and observe how the author puts the meals together.

Start out by cooking some of these recipes and putting together the meals as they are listed in the book. You can also follow the recipes that are included at the end of this eBook to get you started. After you follow a few recipes and put together some of the suggested meals you should get a feel for how to do it on your own.

KEEP A RECIPES AND MEALS JOURNAL

In an earlier chapter we talked about starting a journal. The best format for this is a three ring binder where you can divide it into section. Now, you can add two more sections to that: one for recipes and the other for meals. As you make recipes that you like, write them down in this section. You can do the same thing with meals that you've decided to be successful. You can also keep this journal not in notebook but as a folder on your computer with different files.

CONSULT WITH A NUTRITIONIST

Another great idea is to consult with a nutrition that is familiar with the raw foods diet to help you put together great meals. Bring your journal or notebook with you during the sessions and take lots of notes. You can also show the nutritionist meals and recipes you have been preparing to make sure you are on the right track.

One thing that they can help you do is analyze the foods to make sure that you are getting the perfect blend of nutrients that will help enhance your health. This is also a great option for you if you have health problems that you need to manage such as high blood pressure, cancer, anaemia, or diabetes.

DON'T WORRY, IT GETS EASIER

As mentioned earlier, the first week will probably be the most confusing. You will likely spend a lot of time planning your meals and recipes when you are first starting out. Don’t worry, it does get easier. After the first week you can even reuse the same menus and recipes until you fall into a routine. You can also make the changes gradually so you don’t get overwhelmed. For example, you can set a goal to have one completely raw meal each day for the first week or so and gradually add more raw meals and snacks in the coming weeks.

6

RECIPES

By now I bet you're eager to get started preparing some meals. For many, this is a whole new way of preparing food. At first, the techniques may take some getting used to – but don't worry, it does get easier. And as you can see, the diet does include a lot of variety in terms of flavor and the kinds of recipes you can eat.

APPETIZERS

LETTUCE WRAPS

This makes for an attractive appetizer at a party, or just for the heck of it!

Ingredients:

- 2 ripe avocados, pitted and mashed
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- ½ yellow onion, diced
- 2 cloves fresh garlic, chopped
- ¼ cup fresh chopped parsley
- Kernels from one ear of fresh corn
- Juice from half a lime
- 6-8 romaine lettuce leaves (large)

Add the first seven ingredients to a large medium bowl. Mix until well combined. Place two tablespoons of the mixture in the center of each lettuce leaf. Roll the leaf up and present it on a platter.

HUMMUS

Hummus is a classic but most recipes call for canned chickpeas. Instead, buy dried chickpeas and soak them overnight or until they get soft.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups chickpeas, soaked
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1/3 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 cup pitted black olives, diced

Instructions:

Combine all of the ingredients in a food processor or blender and pulse until creamy. Transfer to a serving dish and serve with crackers, bread, or whole grain pita wedges.

Grain Dishes

EASY FLAX CRACKERS

This recipe is easy and satisfying but it does require the flax seeds to be soaked for several hours. This recipe also requires a dehydrator.

Ingredients:

- 4 cups whole flax seeds, soaked for six hours
- 1/3 cups Bragg's liquid aminos
- Fresh squeezed juice from 2 lemons

Instructions:

After the flax seeds have soaked add the liquid aminos and lemon juice. Mix until well combined. Spread out the mixture as thin as you can and add it to the dehydrator. Let it dry out for five hours or so. If you can set the temperature, set it to 105 degrees.

RAW OATMEAL RECIPE

Oatmeal is the ultimate comfort food. This raw version can be sweetened with raw honey (unless you are a vegan).

Ingredients:

- 2 cups oat groats that can be sprouted, soaked for 10 hours in plenty of water
- 1 apple, peeled and chopped
- 2 dried figs, chopped

- ¼ cup raisins
- ¼ tsp vanilla
- pinch of cinnamon

Instructions:

Once oats are done soaking, drain the water. The groats then need to be drained and rinsed every day for the next two day days. Once this process is complete, soak the dried fruit for an hour or so until it becomes soft. Drain the juice out. Add all ingredients to a food processor or blender and blend. You can garnish this with cinnamon and sweeten it with raw honey.

DRINKS AND SMOOTHIES

RAW ALMOND MILK

Almond milk is a nourishing and tasty alternative to raw almonds.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup raw almonds, soaked for several hours
- 3 cups filtered water
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla
- Raw honey to taste

Add soaked almonds, water, vanilla, and honey to a food processor or blender. Blend until it forms into a liquid. Strain and bottle into a Mason jar and store for up to a week in the refrigerator. You may want to save the pulp.

BASIC SMOOTHIE RECIPE

This is a basic smoothie recipe that can be adapted to suit your tastes. You may want to use frozen fruit to make it thicker. Smoothies also make a great dessert.

Ingredients:

- ½ cup chopped banana
- ½ cup strawberries
- 1 cup raw almond milk, raw
- Honey or soaked dried fruit as a sweetener

Combine all the ingredients in a blender. Pulse until smooth and creamy.

MAIN COURSES AND SIDE DISHES

The following recipes can double as both side dishes and main entrees. Besides these recipes listed also keep in mind that salads can be great served as a whole dinner or as an entrée. A small salad makes a perfect accompaniment for these dishes.

NUT PATE

This pate uses raw nuts instead of other ingredients, like liver. This gives it a distinct taste and makes it a great accompaniment for raw crackers, such as the flax crackers listed above.

- 1 cup blanched almonds, soaked in water for 24 hours
- 1 cup sunflower seeds, soaked in water for 8 hours and rinsed
- 1/4 cup sesame seeds, soaked 8 hours and rinsed
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped fine
- 3 stalks celery, chopped fine
- 1 small onion, chopped fine
- 2 teaspoons powdered kelp
- 2 tablespoons Bragg Liquid Aminos or to taste
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice

Combine all of the ingredients in a food processor and pulse until it is completely pulverized. Form into a pate shape and serve with raw foods diet friendly crackers

CURRIED BROWN RICE

This is an excellent choice as a side dish or even an entrée, especially with an additional protein source such as chickpeas.

- 1/2 cup of brown rice, soaked in water for twelve hours
- ½ cup chopped green beans
- 1 pound carrots
- 1/2 small beet
- 1 cup spinach
- 1 stalk celery
- 1 clove garlic, grated
- 1/2 small onion chopped finely
- olive oil

- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- Legumes, optional

Drain brown rice after the twelve hours is up. Mix green beans into rice and transfer to serving dish. Soak the onion and garlic in some olive oil for a few minutes in a separate serving dish. Mix curry and olive oil in a small dish until it forms a paste. Juice the beet, spinach, and celery together and add to curry paste. Pour the resulting sauce over the rice and green beans. You can also add legumes to the dish to make it a complete meal.

DESSERTS

Desserts don't need to be complicated. They can be as simple as a piece of fruit or a little more complicated. Here are some dessert ideas:

- Make a thicker smoothie and serve it in pretty dessert dishes

- Serve fresh or dried fruit alone as a dessert.

- Soak dried fruit in fresh squeezed juice for thirty minutes. Puree in a blender until a paste forms and serve it in a pretty serving dish.

In addition, here is a recipe for fudge that follows the requirements of the raw foods diet.

Raw Foods Fudge

- 2 cups cashews, soaked for six hours until soft and then drained
- 1 cup pitted dates

- 1 cup unsulphered raisins
- 2 heaping tablespoons of carob powder
- ½ cup fresh pineapple juice
- ½ cup distilled or filtered water
- 1 cup flaxseed meal
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

Place cashews, dates, raisins, carob powder, pineapple juice and water in a food processor and pulse until a thick paste forms. Stir in the flaxseed meal and water. The mixture will be extremely thick. Pour mixture into a large cookie sheet and place in the freezer. Remove out of freezer after two hours and cut into squares. It can be stored immediately or placed back in the freezer until it’s time to enjoy them.

CONCLUSION

It takes a full commitment to successfully make the switch to a raw foods diet. It really helps if your entire family is on board. However, if they aren't, you can still make this work. You may want to serve them a raw meal here and there so you don't feel left out.

The fact is, a raw foods diet is extremely healthy for you and can help clear up certain health problems like heart disease. It can also give you more energy and promote longevity. However, it is important to note that it is not for everyone. If you want to make the switch but are not sure if it's safe, just contact your doctor.

This ebook is designed to give you a quick start into the world of raw foods. Remember that you can always further your knowledge by visiting with a specialist, reading a book, or even searching online. There are plenty of recipes and ideas out there that will help make your transition go smoothly.

If you tried the diet and are not sure if it is for you, stick with it for at least a few weeks. It is important to keep a journal so you can log your progress. That way you can tell if your health is really improving or not. Most of the times, health will definitely improve. If it isn't it is very important to see a doctor.

Most importantly, have fun with your new lifestyle change. It is important to take charge of your health by feeding it the right foods. The raw foods diet can take you one step closer to reaching the state of health you've always dreamed of.

